

What is claimed is:

1. An optical fiber holder comprising: a tubular member for fitting over an optical fiber bundle comprising a bundle of plural optical fibers to prevent the optical fibers from separating from each other; and a pressing structure for exerting a pressing force on the optical fiber bundle in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the optical fiber bundle to press the optical fiber bundle against an inner periphery of the tubular member.
2. The optical fiber holder in accordance with claim 1, wherein the pressing structure comprises an aperture extending through a peripheral wall of the tubular member from an outer periphery of the tubular member to the inner periphery of the tubular member, and a pressing member for exerting the pressing force on the optical fiber bundle through the aperture.
3. The optical fiber holder in accordance with claim 1, wherein the pressing structure is spaced a predetermined distance apart from a leading edge of the optical fiber bundle in the longitudinal direction.
4. The optical fiber holder in accordance with claim 1, wherein the pressing structure is located inwardly of the outer periphery of the tubular member.
5. The optical fiber holder in accordance with claim 1, wherein the inner periphery of the tubular member comprises a holding portion having a diameter capable of holding the optical fiber bundle relatively tightly, and a larger-diameter portion located closer to a leading edge of the optical fiber bundle than the holding portion and having a larger diameter than the holding portion, the larger-diameter portion being configured to fit around a fused leading end portion of the optical fiber bundle inserted through the tubular member.
6. An optical fiber holder comprising a tubular member for fitting over an optical

fiber bundle comprising a bundle of plural optical fibers to prevent the optical fibers from separating from each other, the tubular member defining an aperture extending through a peripheral wall of the tubular member from an outer periphery to an inner periphery of the tubular member.

7. An optical fiber holder comprising a tubular member for fitting over an optical fiber bundle comprising a bundle of plural optical fibers to prevent the optical fibers from separating from each other, wherein: the tubular member has an inner periphery comprising a holding portion having a diameter capable of holding the optical fiber bundle relatively tightly, and a larger-diameter portion located closer to a leading edge of the optical fiber bundle than the holding portion and having a larger diameter than the holding portion; and the larger-diameter portion is shaped such that planes tangential to respective of predetermined two points on the larger-diameter portion contain respective opposite components that are symmetric with respect to an axis along which the optical fiber bundle extends through the tubular member.

8. A method of holding an optical fiber bundle, comprising the steps of: inserting the optical fiber bundle comprising a bundle of plural optical fibers through a tubular member having an aperture extending through a peripheral wall thereof from an outer periphery to an outer periphery of the tubular member; injecting a predetermined amount of adhesive into the optical fiber bundle through the aperture to fix and hold the optical fibers relatively tightly.